

June 23, 2005

Robert E. Willis
Chief, Environmental Resource Branch
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
P.O. Box 2946
Portland, OR 97208-2946

Dear Mr. Willis:

Thank you for the letter regarding safety concerns that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) has identified with certain conditions of the water quality certification (WQC) that Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) issued on June 23, 2003 for the Columbia River Channel Deepening project. DEQ appreciates the thorough descriptions of each of the elements that have been identified as safety concerns and has determined that a modification of the original WQC to ensure all safety issues have been resolved is warranted.

The following modifications to the WQC dated June 23, 2003 for the Columbia River Channel Deepening project apply:

- 1) Monitoring for turbidity and dissolved oxygen shall be conducted only between sunrise and sunset and will provide the essential representative data required in the WQC;
- 2) The monitoring requirements at the point of discharge during active dredging are eliminated as DEQ does not believe that data is necessary to determine compliance;
- 3) The USACE shall monitor turbidity levels during flowlane disposal activities twice a day, one on the flood tide and one on the ebb tide, between River Miles 3 and 53. Monitoring during flowlane disposal activities above River Mile 53 must be conducted once a day; and,
- 4) During periods of restricted visibility that could cause an unsafe condition, the USACE may postpone required turbidity and dissolved oxygen compliance monitoring until conditions improve if confirmation is made by a third party, such as the Coast Guard Watch Stander or the National Weather Service, that the visibility in the area to be monitored is considered to be restricted and is unsafe to conduct the required monitoring. If monitoring is postponed due to restricted visibility and unsafe conditions, the weather condition (fog, mist, heavy rainstorm, etc.) time of determination, and verification route must be recorded. Regular monitoring must resume once the visibility resumes to safe levels.

DEQ believes that the above modified conditions can be employed while still providing representative data that is required to be collected in the WQC. If there are any questions regarding these modifications, please contact Agnes Lut at 503.229.5247.

Thank you,

Robert P. Baumgartner, Program Manager
Program Policy & Project Assistance
Water Quality Division

T: CS CDMod

cc: Loree Randall, WA DOE
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